

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 SSM-03 /088 W
-----043404 181317Z /20

O R 181149Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2020
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION SINAI
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 3708

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PINR, IS
SUBJECT: ROLE OF DAYAN IN PRESENT ISRAELI DECISION-MAKING

1. SUMMARY: DAYAN HAS CHOSEN TO PLAY A MINIMAL
ROLE IN RECENT ISRAELI DECISIONS ON LEBANON, EVEN THOUGH
IT IS WELL WITHIN HIS DOMAIN AND HE FAVORED SOME IDF
ACTION IN THE AREA. HIS DETACHMENT PROBABLY STEMS FROM
HIS CONTINUING SENSITIVITY OVER THE CRITICISM HE RECEIVED
FOR HIS HANDLING OF THE YOM KIPPUR WAR AND A DESIRE TO
AVOID BEING CONNECTED TO ANOTHER OPERATION INVOLVING BATTLE
CASUALTIES. IN ADDITION, HIS HEALTH CONTINUES TO BE A
PROBLEM AND HE TENDS TO BE LESS THAN FULLY ATTENTIVE TO
ISSUES IN WHICH HE IS NOT A CENTRAL PARTICIPANT. HIS
NON PARTICIPATION HAS PROBABLY BEEN A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE
OBVIOUS LACK OF THOUGHT WHICH ISRAELIS HAVE GIVEN TO THE
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DIPLOMATIC CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR LEBANESE INCURSION. AS
THE SCENE SHIFTS TO THE UN, DAYAN PROBABLY WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE
BEING THE DEFENDER OF GOI POLICIES IN LEBANON AND CAN
BE EXPECTED TO PERFORM ABLY AND VIGOROUSLY. END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN-- OUT OF NECESSITY RATHER THAN
BY CHOICE-- WILL BE THRUST INTO A PROMINENT ROLE IN COM-

ING DAYS AS ISRAEL CONFRONTS A MAJOR POLITICAL CHALLENGE IN THE UN OVER ITS INVASION OF SOUTHERN LEBANON. WITH THIS IN MIND, WE HAVE PREPARED THE FOLLOWING UP-DATE ON THE MIND-SET OF THIS COMPLEXT FIGURE.

3. DAYAN WATCHERS ARE CONSCIOUS OF A MUCH DIFFERENT DAYAN SINCE THE YOM KIPPUR WAR. THE CRITICISM AND STORM OF CONTROVERSY THAT ERUPTED AROUND HIM IN THE WAR'S AFTERMATH HAS HAD A PROFOUND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON HIM THAT IS EVIDENT IN HIS GENERAL DEMEANOR. PRIOR TO THAT WAR, DAYAN WAS THE SABRA GENERATIONS' FAIR-HAIRED BOY. ALTHOUGH ALWAYS CONTROVERSIAL FOR HIS UNORTHODOX IDEAS AND PROMISCUOUS LIFE-STYLE, HE ENJOYED WIDESPREAD ADULATION IN ISRAEL AND WAS ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN ISRALIS WORLD WIDE. HIS WORLD CRASHED DOWN ON HIM ON OCTOBER 6, 1973. MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE HE ACCEPTED BEGIN'S APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN MINISTER, AT THE PRICE OF CENSURE BY HIS LIFELONG COLLEAGUES, PRIMARILY TO RETRIEVE HIS PLACE IN HISTORY.

4. DAYAN IS UNSURE OF HIS CABINE POSITION. (ACCORD-
ING TO SOME OBSERVERS THIS WAS EVEN TRUE WHEN HE SERVED
ESHKOL AND LATER GOLDA; BUT DURING THOSE PERIODS HE
AT LEAST HAD SOME SUPPORT IN THE LABOR PARTY.) HE TENDS
TO FEEL HE IS IN THE CABINET ONLY BY BEGIN'S SUFFERANCE,
AND IS THEREFORE COMPLETELY DEPENDENT UPON HSI RELATION-
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SHIP TO BEGIN. IN ADDITION TO HIS POLITICAL LOYALTY,
DAYAN FEELS A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO THE PRIME MINISTER
BECAUSE BEGIN RESCUED HIM FROM THE POLITICAL WILDERNESS.
THEIR RELATIONSHIP WAS STRAINED RECENTLY, HOWEVER, WHEN
BEGIN PRIVATELY ADMONISHED HIM FOR HIS STATEMENT ON IS-
RAELI RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA. BEGIN HAS ALWAYS BEEN
CAREFUL TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF CONFLICT WITH DAYAN,
EVEN THOUGH THE TWO APPROACH FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS FROM
VERY DIFFERENT PREMISES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 3708

5. ALTHOUGH DAYAN AND WEIZMAN ARE BOTH PRAGMATISTS, THEY TOO HAVE SUBSTANTIVE DISAGREEMENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, WEIZMAN ACCUSES DAYAN OF HAVING BEEN TOO PESSIMISTIC RIGHT FROM THE START OVER THE CHANCES FOR PEACE. HE ALSO ACCUSES HIM OF HAVING UNNECESSARILY, OR AT LEAST TOO EARLY, BROUGHT THE US INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT, AN ACTION WHICH HAS COMPLICATED WHAT WEIZMAN CONSIDERS WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN A CLEARLY BILATERAL NEGOTIATION. DAYAN IS, MOREOVER, CLOSE TO SHARON'S VIEWS ON SETTLEMENTS AND WAS NOT PLEASED THAT BEGIN GAVE IN TO WEIZMAN ON THAT ISSUE. DAYAN-WEIZMAN RELATIONSHIP ALSO HAS A STRONG ELEMENT OF PERSONAL CONFLICT GOING BACK TO THE DAYS WHEN THEY WERE BROTHERS-IN-LAW AND THE NATURAL RIVALRY OF TWO AMBITIOUS AND STRONG MEN.

6. DAYAN HAS CONSISTENTLY MADE CLEAR TO US SINCE
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HE BECAME FOREIGN MINISTER THAT LEBANON WAS NOT HIS RESPONSIBILITY. HE TOLD US THAT THESE QUESTIONS SHOULD BE RAISED WITH BEGIN OR WEIZMAN. THIS PROBABLY RESULTS FROM THE DISTINCT DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE BEGIN CABINET, BUT ALSO FROM DAYAN'S CONTINUING SENSITIVITY TO THE FACT THAT MANY ISRAELIS STILL HOLD HIM LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE '73 LOSSES. HE THEREFORE DOES NOT WANT TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH ANY NEW MILITARY OPERATIONS.

7. IN ADDITION, WE HEAR CONTINUING REPORTS THAT DAYAN IS NOT WELL. AS WE HAVE REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, HIS EYE SOCKET AND HIS BACK GIVE HIM GREAT PAIN AT TIMES. WHEN THIS

OCCURS, HE TENDS NOT TO CONCENTRATE ON THE SUBJECT AT HAND, PARTICULARLY WHEN HE IS NOT CLOSLEY INVOLVED IN THE SUBJECT.

8. ISRAEL'S PLANNING FOR ITS MILITARY OPERATION INTO LEBANON OBVIOUSLY DID NOT INCLUDE THE DIPLOMATIC FOLLOW-ON MEASURES THAT MIGHT HAVE ENABLED IT TO ESTABLISH A ZONE PERMANENTLY FREE OF TERRORISTS NORTH OF ITS BORDER. ALTHOUGH DAYAN IS BELIEVED TO HAVE SUPPORTED, OR AT LEAST NOT OPPOSED, AN IDF STRIKE INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON, HE TOOK NO PART IN ITS PLANNING, NOR DID HE OR ANYONE ELSE IN THE GOI THINK THROUGH THE DIPLOMATIC FOLLOW-ON MEASURES WHICH WOULD BE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE ISRAEL'S OBJECTIVE -PERMANENT REMOVAL OF THE PLO FROM SOUTH OF THE LITANI. DAYAN'S RELUCTANCE TO ENGAGE HIMSELF ACTIVELY IN ISRAELI DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT MAY EXPLAIN WHAT IS QUICKLY BECOMING A MAJOR DIPLOMATIC PROBLEM. CERTAINLY HE WILL HAVE TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED-IF ONLY TO TRY TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE-- AS THE ISSUE MOVES TO THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA AT THE U.N. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO TAKE ON THIS TASK WITHOUT RESERVATIONS AND TO ARGUE THE ISRELI CASE VIGOROUSLY AND ABLY.

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